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## DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

## A PLEA FOR 'SCIENT.'

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I wish to ask you not to use 'Scientist' in the pages of SCIENCE any longer, but to employ in its place the term 'Scient,' which is already well known in English in such compounds as 'omniscient' and 'prescient.' 'Scientist' appears to have been formed from 'Science' after the fashion of Artist from Art, but the 't' is an unfortunate intruder, and the better derivative would have been 'Sciencist.' But 'Scient' is shorter and much more correct. Moreover, it is the exact equivalent of the French term 'Savant,' which is frequently used in English also, but generally in a more or less derisive sense. Therefore, let us in future say 'Scient' (= 'sciens,' a man that knows) to which there is no possible objection, and which is already in frequent use in composition.

T. L. SCLATER.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,  
June 23.

[It is easier to name a hundred species than to give currency to one obsolete word. The word 'Scientist' was introduced by the late Dr. B. A. Gould. It is not used in editorial contributions to this JOURNAL, but being a useful word, correctly formed (from *scientia*; cf., scientific), it bids fair to outlive its ugly associations, perhaps more quickly in Great Britain than in the United States.—ED. SCIENCE.]

## SHARPENING MICROTOME KNIVES.

SINCE Professor Minot has brought into prominent notice\* Moll's method of sharpening microtome knives, it might be of interest to call attention to the fact that in an earlier paper†

\* SCIENCE, N. S. 5, No. 127, June 4, 1897. Pp. 865-866.

† Moll, J. W., *Het slijpen van microtoom-nessem*, Botanisch Jaarboek uitg. door het Kruidkundig Genootschap Dodonaea te Gent. 3, 1891, 541-554. Pl. 15; with a French résumé, pp. 554-556. (Gent, J. Vuylsteke.)

Moll describes a very useful part of the method which is not mentioned in the article cited by Professor Minot. It consists simply in the use of emery and water on plate glass to grind the knife into shape and to renew the edge when it has been injured in any way. After trying numerous abrasives, including the particular grades of emery used by Moll, I discovered that carborundum is by far the best for this purpose. It is so extremely hard and is supplied in such uniform grades\* that it is possible after the knife has once been ground to shape to grind out a bad nick in a few minutes, which greatly minimizes the annoyances of cutting resistant tissues. After the edge has been smoothed as much as possible with the finest grade of carborundum, diamantine† is used as Professor Minot describes. Moll recommends using one side of the plate for grinding and the other for polishing the edge. To grind into shape the edge of a knife or razor as furnished by the manufacturer is a matter of considerable difficulty, and here in particular carborundum or emery is almost indispensable. Those possessing microtomes in which razors can be clamped will probably find it more convenient to obtain thick razors already ground to shape and with the superfluous part of the cutting edge removed, as advocated by Moll. Such razors, of good English manufacture, slightly hollow-ground, and having a cutting edge measuring about 14-16°, are sold by P. J. Kipp & Zonen, Delft, Holland, for \$2.50. (A glass plate mounted on a wooden block for sharpening the same can be had for \$1.25.) These razors are rigid, in this respect very different from the thin, very hollow-ground ones usually found on the market. They have an advantage over knives in being more easily handled, besides being cheaper and easier to protect from injury when not in use.

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\* I have used the No. 2 Carborundum of the 'sizes' 220, 1 minute, 5 minutes and 10 minutes, supplied by the Carborundum Company, Monongahela City, Pa.

† No. 1 pour franchir of A. Guyot-Lupold, Locle, Switzerland.